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Thursday, 07 January 2010, 18:48

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HAVANA 000011

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA AND WHA/PD

STATE FOR OES

EO 12958 DECL: 01/06/2020

TAGS SENV, PGOV, ECON, PREL, CU

SUBJECT: CLIMATE CHANGE PROVIDES GOC WITH MUCH NEEDED

DISTRACTION

REF: A. HAVANA 168 ("CUBA WEIGHS IN ON CAPITALISTS CRISIS") B. HAVANA 763 (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION) C. HAVANA 736 ("HUMAN RIGHTS DAY TURNS

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Classified By: Principal Officer Jonathan Farrar for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: The Government of Cuba (GOC) used the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen to distract attention from problems within Cu

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL BATTLE IN HUMAN HISTORY

12. (SBU) Communist Party leader and former President Fidel Castro has mentioned or focused on the Copenhagen Conference and the role of the Ur

13. (SBU) Following the conference, Fidel wrote three straight Reflections devoted to attacking President Obama's participation in Copenhagen.

FOREIGN MINISTER ACTS OUT FIDEL'S REFLECTIONS

14. (SBU) Fidel wrote on December 19, as if he were still in charge of the country, that Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez would explain in a pr

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the Copenhagen Accord. This was only his fourth press conference since becoming Foreign Minister following one on the U.S. embargo in September

WHY SO ANGRY?

15. (SBU) At the heart of Cuba's complaints was not the substance of the Copenhagen Accord but rather the process, in particular the fact that

IDEOLOGUES TRUMP SCIENTISTS

16. (C) A British diplomat told us that there are in fact moderates in the Cuban government that were interested in negotiating a productive ag

USEFUL DOMESTIC DISTRACTION

17. (SBU) Copenhagen also provided the international media with a distraction from the fruitless domestic meetings taking place at the same tin

18. (C) Another common theme in Fidel's Reflections, Foreign Minister Rodriguez's press conference and the official press was the "brutality of

CUBA'S SELF-INTEREST IN CLIMATE CHANGE

19. (C) Despite the circus-like treatment that Cuba's mercurial leader afforded to climate issues, many in the GOC are actually serious about c

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southwest coast (Zapata Swamp). She said the GOC includes environmental considerations in all national development plans. The British diplomat

110. (SBU) The UN Development Program has a \$25.5 million program in Cuba for 2008-2012 focused on climate change and sustainable energy. Proje

111. (C) Several U.S. environmental groups, like the Environmental Defense Fund, have close relationships with Cuban officials in the Ministry

COMMENT

112. (C) Climate change is Fidel Castro's latest pet project in which poor, socialist countries are the victims and rich, capitalist countries